

A STUDY OF PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES USED TO PREPARE COMPETENT
GROUP LEADERS BY INSTRUCTORS IN CACREP- ACCREDITED MASTER'S
LEVEL GROUP COURSES

By

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This study identified the practices and procedures of instruction that is being implemented by group counseling instructors at CACREP-accredited institutions. A survey questionnaire developed by the researcher was used to gather data from 160 CACREP-accredited counseling units across the United States. The survey was designed to collect input from group instructors on how the didactic, practicum, and experiential components of the master's level group course are being implemented.

Three assumptions were made in conducting this study: 1.) The majority of master's level group instructors will report that they use a didactic component in preparing students to become effective group leaders, 2.) The majority of master's level group instructors will report that they use an experiential component in preparing students to become effective group leaders, and 3.) The majority of master's level group instructors will report that they use a practicum component in preparing students to become effective group leaders.

The survey questionnaire and, consequently, the results were divided into the respective sections of didactic, experiential, and practicum. The results indicated that each of these components were utilized in the instruction of master's level group courses.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Group counseling has emerged as an important modality in achieving therapeutic goals (Posthuma, 1999). Although efficacy of this modality was questioned in the late 1950's and early 1960's, the use of group procedures has gained acceptance and credibility among practitioners (Duncan & Gumaer, 1981). Groups have proven to be effective in working with a variety of populations including, but not limited to, the elderly, children, married couples, individuals dealing with chemical dependency, and persons battling cancer (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998). Clearly, the use of group has been identified as a viable method of educating, promoting change and facilitating individual growth (Stockton & Toth, 1996).

Recognition of group effectiveness has continued to grow since J.H. Pratt first conducted the "class method" with tubercular patients in 1905 (Gazda, 1970). Since that time, Moreno, Adler, Slavson, Dreikurs, Rogers, Perls, and other therapists and theorists have contributed to the advancement of group practices. Today, research continues to expand upon the uses and advantages of group procedures.

Experimentation and creativity have served to advance group counseling into its current status as a respected modality. As the variety of group practices have increased, the need for current and practical guidelines has heightened (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998).

Since the founding of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) as a professional organization in 1973, the education, training, and supervision of group counselors has come increasingly under study (Williams, 1990). ASGW 2000 has addressed core standards for the training of group counselors. Revisions to the 1983 ASGW Training Standards for Group Counselors (ASGW 1990; ASGW, 2000) serve to establish broadened definitions and updated guidelines for specialization training, as well as provides standards for content and clinical instruction.

Counselor education programs have standards designed to address the task of teaching group concepts and techniques to students. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) (2001) has identified “group work” as one of eight common-core areas in which students are required to have experience and demonstrate knowledge. According to the Association, students must have an understanding of group theory and dynamics, group leadership styles, group counseling methods, ethical standards, and relevant research in the field of group work. CACREP’s commitment to standardizing the teaching of group concepts and procedures reflects the importance of this modality. Due to these standards, most counselor education programs report at least one group course as a part of their curriculum (Furr & Barret, 2000).

Counselor educators seem to agree that group work is an essential component in the training of counselors (Furr & Barrett, 2000). Since the escalation of group practice in the mid 1960’s, a variety of issues have developed in the preparation of group leaders. Effective methods of training group practitioners have been of primary importance (Forester-Miller & Duncan, 1990).

Merta, Johnson, and McNeil (1995) report that the majority of counselor education master's programs offer at least one course in group work. In many cases, there seem to be at least two courses offered which provides the student with a specialization in group. CACREP standards require counseling students to fulfill curricular experiences and demonstrate knowledge in group work. As Merta et al. (1995) has reported, this requirement is characteristically met through a course in group work. This single course is expected to meet CACREP requirements of students' understanding of group theories, ethical practice of group concepts, and skills necessary to lead a variety of different groups (Furr & Barrett, 2000).

While specifically stating the standards of group worker training, CACREP standards (2001) appear to lack a clear definition of how counselors can best be trained to lead a group. Many counselor educators indicate that the required course in group work is strictly introductory in nature. However, considering that most counselors will likely be required to lead a group in a professional environment, the single required course appears to leave students at risk for leading groups for which they are ill-prepared (Merta et al., 1995).

With curriculum at the master's level apparently at a level of saturation, counselor educators have difficulty adding any more courses that might assist future group facilitators in achieving a specialization in group (Merta et al., 1995). If a single course remains the norm for exposing students to group work for the completion of a master's degree, efficient methods for preparing students to be group leaders would be beneficial.

Statement of the Problem

CACREP-accredited institutions require that master's level counseling students be exposed to group work before graduating. Most institutions fulfill this requirement through the master's level group course. Although the group course is described, by some instructors as introductory in nature many graduates rely strictly upon the information acquired from the course in leading groups.

Research shows that the majority of master's level counselors will be required to lead a group after entering a professional setting. A need for greater understanding of the practices and procedures used to teach group at CACREP-accredited institutions exists. Group instructors would benefit from research in developing efficient and effective means of teaching group concepts, ethics, techniques, and procedures.

Review of Related Literature

History of Group Work

S.R. Slavson (1947) references the therapeutic value of groups being realized in a variety of ancient civilizations. He proclaimed that history has proven group to be a vehicle "for spiritual uplift and an antidote to mental depression" (p.24). The literature suggests that the earliest work done within a group setting was that of Joseph H. Pratt in 1905. Pratt applied his "class method" in working with tubercular patients (Gazda, 1970). This group method was designed to boost the morale of tubercular patients through teaching the practice of better hygiene. The method employed was directive in nature. Berg, Landreth, and Fall (1998) identify Pratt's use of group as most closely aligned with what would currently be referred to as group guidance. The authors also suggest that Dr. Pratt was likely unaware of the psychological value of the group. However, Pratt made a

valuable observation in that the group derived more from the supportive atmosphere of the group than the lectures that were being conducted.

The effects of group interaction observed by Pratt continued through the work of practitioners like E.W. Lazell and L.C. Marsh. The first documented use of group procedures in a lecture format was employed by E.W. Lazell. A psychiatrist working with patients suffering from schizophrenia, Dr. Lazell would conduct inspirational speeches with his patients. L.C. Marsh, an Episcopal minister who became a psychiatrist, also lectured in mental hospitals. Dr. Marsh also made use of group discussions, art, music, and dance to create social interaction among patients. Marsh may best be known by his quote, “By the crowd they have been broken; by the crowd they shall be healed” (Gazda, 1970, p.7).

J.L. Moreno advanced the practice of group counseling through his work with children, displaced persons, and prostitutes (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998; Gazda, 1970). In 1925, Moreno introduced psychodrama to the United States. He later coined the phrase “group therapy” in 1931. The next year, 1932, he began using the term “group psychotherapy”. The author of several books and journal articles, as well as, the founder and president of several organizations devoted to psychodrama and group, J.L. Moreno is still considered to have been the most influential man in the field of group psychotherapy (Gazda, 1970, p.8).

Trigant Burrow was the first reported practitioner to apply psychoanalytic concepts to group psychotherapy. In 1932, he reported the presence of transference relationships and defense mechanisms in group situations. Burrow believed that the isolation of the individual in a therapeutic relationship may be hazardous to that

individual's "relatedness" to society (Kadis, Krasner, Winick & Foulkes, 1963, p.12).

Samuel R. Slavson, a prolific writer on the subject of group interaction, became well known in the thirties and forties for his work in activity groups. His work focused on children with character disorders in a setting in which physical activities were utilized (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998; Gazda, 1970; Kadis et al., 1963). Haim Ginott later contributed to the work of Slavson through his development of new techniques in play and activity therapy (Gazda, 1970).

Approximately the same time that Burrow was introducing his ideas on group psychotherapy, Kurt Lewin was developing the concepts of field theory and group dynamics. These concepts have been instrumental in the definition of modern group procedure and theory (Kadis et al., 1963). In 1946, Lewin later participated as a collaborator for a workshop on inter-group relations in New Britain, Connecticut. The workshop developed into what later became referred to as a training group or "T-group" (Appley & Winder, 1973, p.19).

The workshop participants were composed of social workers, teachers, and some business people. On a particular day, some of the participants were present with staff. While collaborating on data obtained during the workshop, the staff and participants realized that there were some differences and similarities between perceptions of members' behavior (Appley & Winder, 1973).

The primary discovery was that "feedback", a method of receiving and giving personal perception about others' behavior and interactions, was a dynamic and powerful means of learning. The concept of a workshop was changed with the discovery of this "accidental innovation". This discovery spawned the development of a "'back-home'"

problem-centered workshop” for community leaders. The perception of workshops or “laboratories” became synonymous with “here and now” feedback sessions about behavior. The members of the group could examine their own behavior and experiment with alternative actions as solutions for problems faced in institutions and organizations outside of the laboratory. “The laboratory movement” led to the development of the National Training Laboratories (NTL). The NTL became the primary mode of conducting workshops intended to address social problems and pioneered the concept of emphasis of group process rather than content (Appley & Winder, 1973, pp. 19-22; Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998).

Carl Rogers developed a group model based on his assumption that individuals have the innate ability to realize their full potential (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998, p.33). Rogers (1970) contributed to the concept of group process through identification of patterns that occur during the group. Rogers, along with Thomas Gordon, Nicholas Hobbs, Walter Lifton, Charles Truax, and Eugene Gendlin, has also been an advocate for the experiential approach to group process (Gazda, 1970).

Yalom (1995) has continued the study of interpersonal and existential group process by providing a text rich in scientific research in group process. Yalom’s book, The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, has provided research-based techniques and conceptualization methods. In addition, Yalom’s text also introduces the concept of the group as a “social microcosm” and also provides “therapeutic factors” necessary throughout each group process (pp.1, 28).

In 1973, the Association for the Specialists in Group Work was founded. ASGW was engineered with the intention to provide distinctions between types of groups, ethical

guidelines for group counselors, and specific training guidelines (Merta et. al., 1995). The ASGW guidelines continue to provide a clear statement of the competencies for group specialists. The guidelines also delineate the definitions of core competencies for students of group and areas of mastery for group practitioners (Huhn, Zimpfer, Waltman & Williamson, 1985). The ASGW (2000) has aligned with CACREP (2001) standards to develop group counselors in training.

Levels of Group Training

The Association for Specialists in Group Work (2000), which will be referenced from this point as ASGW, has provided two distinct levels of group training: 1.) Core training, which is regarded as a “set of core competencies in group work that all counselors should possess”; and, 2.) Specialist training, which “advocates practitioners of group work must possess advanced competencies relevant to the particular kind of group work practice in which the group work students want to specialize” (pp. 328, 329). The ASGW recommends the incorporation of core competencies in group work into entry-level training in all counselor education programs. However, the specialist competencies are not required, or expected to be met by master’s level counselor education programs. Instead, recommendation for graduates of master’s level programs in counselor education who wish to become competent group facilitators are to obtain post-master’s certification or to achieve entry into doctoral studies (ASGW, 2000).

The core training standards identified by ASGW are consistent with the requirements designated by CACREP for completion of a master’s degree in counselor education. The requirement is at least one course in group work, which includes coursework intended to educate the student in scope of practice, types of group work,

group development, group process and dynamics, group leadership, and standards of practice for group workers. Students of the required group course are also expected to participate in an experiential component of the course. This requirement includes a minimum of 10 clock hours of observation of a group and participation in a group (ASGW, 2000).

ASGW (2000) identifies four areas of specialization in group practice: 1.) Task and work group facilitation, 2.) Psychoeducational group leadership, 3.) Group counseling, and 4.) Group Psychotherapy (pp. 330, 331). Training in these areas of group practice requires that the program providing the training have a specified philosophy of training for the preparation of the specialists for independent practice of group work in one of the forms of group work mentioned previously. The program must also show evidence of a specified curriculum designed to prepare students for independent practice of the designated specialization and credentialing of the relevant specialization (ASGW, 2000).

Models of Group Training

Manford A. Sonstegard believed that at least four semesters of training would be required to adequately prepare a group counselor to lead a group. Sonstegard proposed that the student would work with the instructor as a participant of a process group lead by the instructor for the first semester. In the second semester, the student would begin to take over the group with the instructor sitting in as a co-facilitator with a diminished role. The third semester would find the counselor in training leading the group with the instructor present as a member. The counselor in training would manage the group regardless of how successful the group session had been. The student counselor would

begin to have didactic materials introduced in the fourth semester. At this time, the instructor would also cease sitting in on the group. After the session concluded, the counselor in training and the instructor would review how the group went. Videotaped sessions would be introduced in supervision. Sonstegard maintained that didactic materials were not necessary until the fourth semester of training. He believed that the individual would not integrate assigned literature until that individual deemed the material pertinent to learning (Bitter, 1996).

Kadis et al. (1963), described a two- year part-time training program in group psychotherapy. The program began in 1951 as a curriculum within the Group Psychotherapy Department of the Postgraduate Center for Psychotherapy. Each semester of the two- year program contained didactic, experiential, and practical components in separate courses. C.H. Patterson, a leader in the counseling field and a distinguished group practitioner, suggested that group was best learned in a three-course format: a basic group counseling course, a group practicum, and a course in group counseling supervision. Patterson developed the aforementioned format in 1956 and continued the curriculum until 1977 (Vacc, 1989).

Throughout the 1970's, counselor educators began to develop new methods of training group counselors. Counselor education programs described a need for increased focus on training group counselors. An increase in offerings provided by counselor education programs was also indicated as a need (Duncan & Gumaer, 1981, p.44). Gazda (1971) believed the development of effective group counselors required students to be exposed to an experience in group counseling, as well as, a human relations model. Adams and Barr (1971) recommended a model for training group counselors that is

utilized in modern group training. The researchers postulated that education itself was “confronted as an irrelevant process” due its strict didactic nature. While an integral part of learning, the authors believed that the didactic portion of a course in group training was not sufficient. Adams and Barr suggested that experiential learning was also not adequate for true learning of the material. Consequently, the two components were merged by the authors in a four-step workshop design (p.36). Ohlsen (1975) described a 10-week workshop for training students in group work. Within the 10 week period, Trainees participated in a group dynamics laboratory, a therapeutic experience as a client, a didactic course, a group counseling practicum (p.218).

Lechowicz and Gazda (1975) addressed the need for cognitive and experiential training needs of group counselors. The authors identified that the amount and methods of training for group facilitators was “ill-defined”. While training methods for one-to-one counseling settings had been well researched, group counselor training procedures lacked research to guide educators. The study identified cognitive and experiential objectives for the training of group counselors (p.21).

The presence of cognitive components was documented as the primary method of training group counselors. Tate (1973) identified the dearth of patterned experiential components in group training. In 1972, the West Virginia University (WVU) model was initiated during the course of the fall semester. The model provided a training experience, practice and feedback, participation, modeling, and instruction (p.307).

The work of Robert R. Carkhuff (1983) was influential in the training of counselors and other helping professionals. Carkuff developed a model that focused on the trainee’s ability to concentrate on the process and content of the client’s interaction

with the counselor. The author's work identified techniques intended to improve a person's attending skills. Attending skills are imperative in continued interaction between the counselor and client (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998).

The training of group counselors has focused extensively on the experiential component of group process. Strict experiential training models have focused on a two-function basis: teaching skills and group management skills. Each of these components possess direct and indirect (modeling) teaching methods. The model is experiential in nature and lacks the didactic component (Pearson, 1981, pp. 34, 35). Corey (1981) outlined a practicum course in group leadership. The course for undergraduates was a weekend workshop format. The course included didactic and experiential components designed to convey methods of group process and provide a climate of support and challenge that encouraged trainee's to experience leadership in groups, as well as, explore themselves as persons (p. 102).

Dorothy J. Scrivner Blum (1983) addressed the curricular trend of group training to consist of a single course. Blum proposed the need for making the single course effective and efficient. The proposed course was designed to last for two hours, fifty minutes over a period of fifteen weeks. The course possessed didactic, experiential, and practicum components with strict guidelines for the completion of each portion of the course. The author also made reference to the necessity to test group training models (p.84).

The description of typical training models of group counseling in counselor education programs was provided in 1985. The research postulated that typical group curriculums were not designed to produce group work specialists. Results found that the

single course was oriented toward providing students with an overview of group work and basic intervention skills (Huhn et al., 1985, p.131). Career Awareness and Self-exploration (CASE) groups were designed to assist students in increasing self-awareness and to help those who are struggling with choosing a career in teaching. The model was designed to include a cognitive portion, a group experience, and an opportunity to lead a group of students. The supervisors were doctoral-level students in counseling psychology (McWhirter & Frey, 1986).

With the requirement by CACREP for all counselor education programs to offer core training in group work, most programs reported at least one course in group work to fulfill this requirement. In addition, many programs also offered additional courses to fulfill the requirement for specialization in psychoeducational groups, task and work groups, and psychotherapy groups (Wilson, Conyne, & Ward, 1994). The same study defined problems revealed by the data were training students to “conduct relevant assessment and make relevant action based upon those assessments and ensuring that students were engaging in field activities in which they demonstrate classroom learning” (p.53).

Stockton and Toth (1996) identified the need for maximizing the limited time and resources for training group counselors. The authors outlined a variety of methods of training group counselors in a single course format. The literature proposed several proven methods for fulfilling the CACREP required course through didactic, experiential, and practicum components. There is interest among counselor educators in preparing students to become effective group leaders upon completing a master’s degree. While there seems to be a consensus among counselor educators on what should be presented in

a group course, a difference in philosophy exists in two areas: the type of information to be taught to beginning group counselors; and, the methods in which training should be delivered (Robinson, Jones, & Berglund, 1996, pp.172-173)

Ethical Considerations in Training Group Counselors

Three ethical principles identified by ASGW guide group counselor training. The categories include “responsibility for providing information about group work and group services, responsibility for providing group services to clients, and guidelines for safeguarding ethical practice” (Brown, 1992, p.6). Gumaer and Scott (1985) proposed a method for training group counselors in ethical considerations in group counseling. The authors provided three goals for training ethical principles. The first goal was to encourage student self-awareness and self-exploration. The second goal was intended to increase student self-understanding. The final goal was to “initiate action” (p.199- 203). Gumaer and Martin (1990) posited that ethical guidelines for students training to be group counselors were “too vague” and potentially place new counselors in professional danger. The authors recommended ASGW ethical standards are more clearly defined in order to align with CACREP standards and prepare group trainees for ethical practice (p.103).

Ethical dilemmas have been identified in training group counselors. Counselor educators may find themselves in an ethical bind when deciding upon keeping information shared by students in instructor lead groups as “confidential” or to use the information for evaluating competency of the individual in question (Pierce & Baldwin, 1990, p. 149). The authors provided a model for dealing with this sensitive issue in group training. Dual relationships seem to unavoidable in training group counselors. The

CACREP requirement for participation in a group conflicted with the ACA ethical standards that prohibit dual relationships. Methods of addressing the dual relationship have been discussed. Providing a different instructor for the required group would eliminate the danger of dual relationship. CACREP could provide more thorough definitions of violations of dual relationships in teaching the group course and leading a required process group (Pierce & Baldwin, 1990; Lloyd, 1990; Forester-Miller & Duncan, 1990; Williams, 1990). Sklare, Thomas, Williams, and Powers (1996) recommended a “here and now” group experience for group counseling trainees. The model addressed the ethical dilemma through focusing on events that happened within the group “in the moment”, as opposed to, dealing with past events or events that were occurring outside of the group. The authors posited that the aforementioned model of group would allow students to learn about group dynamics, permit them to have a group experience, and remain safe from being evaluated by the group leader/ instructor (p.266, 272).

CHAPTER 2

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to survey the practices of master's level group instructors at CACREP-accredited institutions in methods of teaching group theory, ethics, and skills to students.

Research Question

Among masters level group instructors, how are the didactic, experiential, and practicum components being implemented to prepare students to become competent group leaders?

Assumptions

To carry out the purpose of the study, the following assumptions were formulated:

- 1.) The majority of master's level group instructor's will report that they use a didactic component in preparing students to become effective group leaders.
- 2.) The majority of master's level group instructors will report that they use an experiential component in preparing students to become effective group leaders.
- 3.) The majority of master's level group instructors will report that they use a practicum component in preparing students to become effective group leaders.

Definition of Terms

Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) was founded in 1973 (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998). The ASGW provides professional standards for the training of group workers in which core competencies for master's level training programs and

specialist training standards for professionals who wish to specialize in a particular type of group practice are included (ASGW, 2000). The ASGW has established specific ethical guidelines that govern the behavior of the group counselor (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998).

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) was formed in 1981. The Council provides training standards for programs in counselor education. The Council acts as the primary accrediting body for the American Counseling Association (ACA). The process and the condition of accreditation is extended through voluntary institutional agencies and professional associations. Criteria for evaluation utilized by CACREP are the result of input from educators, practitioners, and the public. Schools with accreditation accept the responsibility to provide training programs consistent with the standards developed by CACREP (CACREP, 2001).

Didactic Training, in regard to group training, is identified as a commonly used component of training group counselors. This component may include readings and lectures on theories in group counseling, goals for group counseling, techniques for beginning groups, ethics of group leadership, evaluation of groups, goal setting, and the role of the group leader (Blum, 1983; Lechowicz & Gazda, 1975; Ohlsen, 1975; Robison, Jones, & Berglund, 1996).

Experiential Training, in regard to group training, may differ based upon the training program providing the experiential training. Methods of experiences for group counselor trainees may include, but not be limited to, participation in an experiential group designed to develop personal insight and develop skills in giving and receiving

feedback and in-class training groups designed to introduce students to group interaction (Adams & Barr, 1971; Furr & Barret, 2000; Jacobs, 1974; Stockton & Toth, 1996).

Group Counseling is the application of principles of normal human development and functioning through group-based cognitive, affective, behavioral, or systemic intervention strategies that are applied in the context of here-and-now interaction (ASGW, 2000).

Group leader is the formal or informal leader of a group who takes responsibility for guiding others within the group to encourage positive change toward accomplishing the group's goals (Ivey, Pedersen, & Ivey, 2001).

Group work is the professional practice of helping others in a formal group context in which the leader takes responsibility for guiding members toward educational and/ or therapeutic goals. Proper practice includes an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches (CACREP, 2001, p.4; Ivey et al., 2001, p.282).

Practicum or Supervised Clinical Experience, is regarded as a critical experience element. CACREP specifies supervised practice in group counseling (CACREP, 1994). A practicum component is considered to be minimally necessary for counselor preparation (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998).

Subject Recruitment

There are 165 CACREP-accredited institutions (CACREP, 2001). The subjects for this study have been recruited from a population of instructors who teach the master's level group course at their respective CACREP-accredited institutions. The mailing list of

group instructors has been generated with the assistance of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Instrument of Measure

Educational phenomena, was examined in the study. The instrument of measure was a survey in the form of a mailed questionnaire (Heppner, Kivlighan, Jr., & Wampold, 1999, p. 204). The survey was developed by the researcher (See Appendix A) and the time range for completing the survey was estimated at approximately ten minutes. A survey questionnaire was considered advantageous for two reasons: 1.) Due to the wide geographic region, the questionnaire cost was lower than an interview; and, 2.) Time required to attain data from a questionnaire was less than an interview (Gall et al., p.289).

Data Collection

After completion of a thorough literature review, the survey questionnaire was developed based upon the research question and related literature. An Application for Approval of Human Subjects was submitted to the Office of Research Services at The University of North Texas. Upon receiving University of North Texas Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the questionnaire was sent to approximately eight counselor educators designated as “experts” in group counseling to test for validity and reliability of the survey. No data was collected until University of North Texas Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted.

The input of participants in the pilot study was integrated into the survey. A list of respondents was generated from each of the 165 CACREP-accredited institutions. One week prior to sending the questionnaire to members of the sample, an initial contact letter

(See Appendix B) was sent to inform the respondents of the imminent arrival of the questionnaire (Gall et al., 1996, p.299). The initial contact letter contained the researcher's name, address, phone number, e-mail address, purpose of the study, and a request that the respondent fill-out the questionnaire.

The modified survey questionnaire was then sent to CACREP-accredited institutions with attention to instructors who teach the master's level group course. The questionnaire mailing included a cover letter (See Appendix C) including notification to the participant that completion and return of the survey entered that participant into a raffle for a Digital Video Disc (DVD) player, the revised, coded survey questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped return envelope. The last page of the questionnaire again thanked the participant for their input and a form for the respondent to fill out in order to receive a summary of the study's results.

The cover letter included the name of the organization involved in the study (University of North Texas); the name, address, phone number, and email address of the primary investigator (Chris Simpson); the purpose of the study; a description of the methods for maintaining confidentiality of responses; and an offer to send a copy of the study's results. All questionnaire responses have been kept confidential. To insure the respondents that confidentiality was being maintained, a code was assigned to each individual. Only the researcher has access to the list of codes.

Approximately 6 weeks after the initial mailing of the survey, a follow-up E-mail was sent to those who did not respond to the initial mailing of the survey. The e-mail included a letter (See Appendix D) reminding the potential respondent about the

survey and thanking them once again for their participation and an attachment containing the survey. The survey contained in the e-mail attachment was modified to accommodate for e-mailing (See Appendix E).

Analysis of Data

The description of data analysis for this study is provided in accordance with each section of the data collection instrument.

Section I- Demographic Information

Frequencies have been tabulated for responses to items 1 through 5. Results were reported in the form of a frequency distribution based upon responses to each item in this section. Proportions were also reported on items 1 through 5 (Hinkle, Wiersma & Jurs, 1998).

Section II- Didactic Component

Frequencies have been tabulated for responses to items 6 through 9. Results were reported in the form of a frequency distribution based upon responses to each item in this section. Proportions were also reported on items 6 through 9 (Hinkle et al., 1998).

A cross-tabulation and chi square test each were tabulated to determine the existence of a relationship between item 2 in Section I and item 8 in Section II.

Section III-Experiential Component

Frequencies were tabulated for responses to items 10 through 23. Results were reported in the form of a frequency distribution based upon responses to each item in this section. Proportions were also reported on items 10 through 23 (Hinkle et al.).

Measures of central tendency in the form of modes were tabulated for items 10 through 18. A cross-tabulation and chi square test each were tabulated to determine the existence of a relationship between item 2 in Section I and items 14, 17, 21, and 22 in Section III.

Section IV-Practicum Component

Frequencies were tabulated for responses to items 24 through 27. Results were tabulated in the form of a frequency distribution based upon responses from each item in this section. Proportions were also reported on items 24 through 27 (Hinkle et al.).

Measures of central tendency in the form of modes were tabulated for items 24 through 26. A cross-tabulation and chi square test each were tabulated to determine the existence of a relationship between item 2 in Section I and items 24 and 25 in Section IV.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of this study have been tabulated in an effort to provide answers to the following question: Among master's level group instructors, how are the didactic, experiential, and practicum components being implemented to prepare students to become competent group leaders.

Additionally, assumptions have been made prior to the collection of data. The first assumption is the majority of master's level group instructor's will report that they use a didactic component in preparing students to become effective group leaders. Secondly, the majority of these instructors will report that they use an experiential component in preparing students to become effective group leaders. And, lastly, the majority of these instructors will report that they use a practicum component in preparing students to become effective group leaders.

In an effort to effectively address the research question and assumptions, the results have been presented in the order of the survey questionnaire. The order was divided into demographic information, the didactic component, the experiential component, and the practicum component, respectively. The types of data reported include frequency distribution, proportions, chi-square, cross-tabulation, and measures of central tendency in the form of modes.

One hundred and sixty surveys were distributed to CACREP-accredited institutions. Initially, 165 listed CACREP-accredited institutions were contacted by phone. Four of the programs informed the researcher of their respective choices not to

participate in the survey and one program was no longer in existence. There were 92 (57.5%) respondents to the first mailing. Of the remaining 68 institutions that were targeted in the second mailing, 8 (5%) responded. The total response for both mailings was one hundred (62.5%). Final statistical analyses were conducted on 100 completed surveys. Institutions responding to the survey represented 37 states.

Section I- Demographic Information

Membership

Respondents were asked to indicate their professional membership. Membership types include the American Counseling Association (ACA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), and the Association of Counseling and Supervision (ACES. Considering that all 100 respondents completed this section of the survey, results in this section will be reported in percentages.

The largest percentage among membership demographics was ACA at 91% ($n=91$). The second largest membership among respondents was ACES at 74% ($n=74$). Results also indicated that 24% ($n=24$) of respondents were members of APA. Membership in ASGW was reported at 49% ($n=49$).

Status

The second inquiry on the survey addressed the respondents' status at their respective institution. All 100 represented institutions responded to this item. Table 1 provides an overview of the status of respondents.

Table 1

Respondent Academic Rank ($n=100$)

Academic Rank	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Assistant Professor	34	34.0
Associate Professor	25	25.0
Full Professor	35	35.0
Other	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0

Experience as Instructor of Group Counseling

The following results described the respondents experience in years as an instructor of group counseling and as a group practitioner, respectively. Of the 100 possible respondents to this item, 99 provided an answer, while one individual did not complete the item. Table 2 provides a description of the results.

Table 2

Reported Experience as a Group Instructor ($n=99$)

Level of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 to 3 Years	20	20.2
4 to 6 Years	15	15.1
7 to 9 Years	15	15.1
10 to 12 Years	7	7.1
13 or More Years	42	42.4
Total	99	100.0
Missing	1	
Total	100	

Experience as a Group Practitioner

Table 3 presents a description of responses to the inquiry into group instructor's experience as group practitioners. Ninety-eight individuals responded to this item.

Table 3

Reported Experience as a Group Practitioner ($n=98$)

Level of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 to 3 Years	13	13.3
4 to 6 Years	11	11.2
7 to 9 Years	16	16.3
10 to 12 Years	11	11.2
13 or More Years	47	48.0
Total	98	100.0

Involvement as a Group Member

The survey also inquires about respondents' experience as a group member. Table 4 displays the results of this item.

Table 4

Participation as a Group Member (n=98)

Participation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 to 3 Hours	7	7.1
4 to 6 Hours	4	4.1
7 to 9 Hours	3	3.1
10 to 12 Hours	6	6.1
13 to 15 Hours	3	3.1
16 or More Hours	75	76.5
Total	98	100.0

Group Practitioner Outside of the Academic Setting

The final item of demographic data refers to respondents' involvement as a group practitioner outside of the academic setting. The choices of responses were simply "Yes" and "No". Seventy-one (74%, $n=96$) of respondents marked "No" to this item.

Section II-Didactic Component

Teaching Methodologies

There was a one-hundred percent (100%) completion of the first item in the didactic section of the survey. This item inquired about all methodologies that were utilized by group instructors to fulfill the group curriculum within a classroom setting. Seven different methodologies were identified for the respondents to mark. These methodologies included assigned reading, lecture, focused discussion, role-play demonstration, guest lecture and demonstration, films and videotape of group demonstration, and an item marked “other” was included. Table 5 indicates the results.

Table 5

Teaching Methodologies Utilized By Instructors ($n=100$)

Methodologies	Instructors Using Methodology	Percentage (%)
Assigned Readings	99	99.0
Lecture	93	93.0
Focused Discussion	90	90.0
Role-play Demonstration	83	83.0
Guest Lecture/Demo	31	31.0
Films and Videotape	90	90.0
Other	53	53.0

All but one of the respondents indicated that “assigned reading” was a methodology used in the classroom setting (99%). The use of “lecture”, “focused discussion”, and “films/ videotape of group demonstration” were also identified as highly utilized methodologies at 93%, 90%, and 90%, respectively. There was a slightly greater discrepancy in the usage of “role play demonstration” at 83% of respondents indicating “Yes”. The majority of participants (69%) indicated that they did not use “guest lectures and demonstrations”. In the item “Other”, the number of responses was relatively even at

53% indicating “Yes” and 47% indicating “No”. In this item, respondents who marked “Yes” indicated a variety of methodologies not listed as choices in the survey.

Lecture Topics

This item asked survey participants to mark those lecture topics that are used in the didactic setting. All 100% of participants responded to this inquiry. The lecture topic choices are as follows: group process, leadership style, group dynamics, group ethics, selection of group members, problems encountered by groups, types of groups, group therapy, working with diverse populations, evaluation of groups, practical considerations in setting up the group, and a choice of “other”. Table 6 indicates the results.

Table 6

Lecture Topics Utilized By Group Instructors (*n*=100)

Lecture Topics	Instructors Utilizing Topic	Percentage (%)
Group Process	100	100.0
Leadership Style	97	97.0
Group Dynamics	100	100.0
Group Ethics	99	99.0
Selection of Group Members	99	99.0
Problems Encountered By Groups	96	96.0
Types of Groups	98	98.0
Group Therapy	92	92.0
Working with Diverse Populations	96	96.0
Evaluation of Groups	82	82.0
Practical Considerations in Setting Up a Group	97	97.0
Other	38	38.0

One hundred percent (100%) of respondents indicated that items “group process”

and “group dynamics” were utilized as lecture topics. “Group ethics” and “selection of group members” were each marked by 99% of survey participants as concepts used as lecture topics. “Types of Groups” was marked by 98% of respondents. “Leadership style” and “practical considerations in setting up the group” were items checked by 97% of respondents. Ninety-six percent (96%) of participants indicated that items “problems encountered by group” and “working with diverse populations” were utilized as lecture topics in teaching a group course. The next item, “group therapy” was marked by 92% of participants. Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents identified the item, “evaluation of groups”, as a lecture topic. Finally, thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents identified that they used other topics for lecture in teaching the group course.

Ranked Importance of Lecture Topics

This item was concerned with the level of importance that group instructors assign to lecture topics in the didactic section of the group course. The responses to this topic varied according to each item. The items, “Group process”, “Group dynamics”, “Group ethics”, “Working with diverse populations”, and “Practical considerations in setting up the group”, each had an 89% response rate. Items labeled “Selection of group members” and “Problems encountered by groups” each posted an 88% response rate. “Types of groups”, “Group theory”, and “Evaluation of groups” each were responded to by 87% of participants. “Leadership style” had an 86% response rate. Due to varying response rates, frequency and percentage of responses will be different.

Most notable among the responses was to the item of “Group process”. Fifty-five survey participants (61.8%) ranked this item as the most important lecture topic in the group curriculum. Twenty-two individuals (24.7%) indicated that this was the second

most important topic in lecture. “Group theory” was considered the most important lecture topic by 14 individuals (16.1%) and “Group dynamics” was assigned the lecture topic of most importance by 13 individuals (14.6%). “Group dynamics,” was also ranked as second in importance by 28 participants (31.5%), and third in importance by 25 participants (28.1%). “Group ethics” was marked as second in importance by 15 respondents (16.9%). In closing, it is important to note that the item, “Evaluation of groups”, was identified as least important as a lecture topic by 26 respondents (29.9%).

Required Group Courses

This item was concerned with the number of group courses that are required for master’s level counseling students at CACREP-accredited institutions. Ninety-nine of one hundred participants responded to this item. Of those respondents, seventy-nine (79.8%) indicated that master’s level counseling students are required to complete one course in group counseling. Twenty participants (20.2%) indicated that master’s level counseling students are required to complete two group counseling courses.

Survey participants were also asked to identify if any of the CACREP core curricular experiences in group work were assigned to other courses within their respective programs. Ninety-seven of one hundred individuals responded to this item. Of those respondents, 51 (52.6%) individuals marked “Yes” to this item, indicating that these core experiences are assigned to other courses and 46 (47.4%) marked “No”.

Cross-Tabulation

Item Two-Cross-Tabulation

The academic rank of participants in this study (item 2) was cross-tabulated with item 8 which asked participants to rank lecture topics in order of emphasis in their given

group course. The status of participants was identified as assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. The three levels of rank among participants were cross-tabulated with each lecture topic under 8. These items are as follows: group process, leadership style, group dynamics, group ethics, selection of group members, working with diverse populations, types of groups, group theory, evaluation of groups, problems encountered by groups, and practical considerations in setting up a group. The results will be reported in the order of each of these items. In addition, Table 7 provides a synopsis of the number of responses by each academic rank. The responses in each of these ranks were divided into two categories: 1.) Most important, and 2.) Least important.

Group Process

Twenty-nine assistant professors ranked “group process” as most important in emphasis among lecture topics in the group course, while 3 assistant professors ranked this topic as least important. Nineteen associate professors identified this item as most important, and one indicated this as least important. Thirty full professors marked this item as most important, while 1 indicated this was the least important.

Leadership Style

Twenty assistant professors indicated that this lecture topic ranked in the category of most important, while 11 indicated that it was least in importance. Fifteen associate professors identified that this lecture topic ranked as most important and 4 ranked the topic as least important. Twenty-three full professors identified this topic as most important, while 7 indicated that it ranked as least important.

Table 7

Cross-Tabulation of Academic Rank and Importance of Lecture Topic

Lecture Topic	Assistant Professor		Associate Professor		Full Professor	
Ranked Importance	More	Less	More	Less	More	Less
Group Process	29 (85%)	3 (9%)	19 (76%)	1 (4%)	30 (86%)	1 (3%)
Leadership Style	20 (59%)	11 (32%)	15 (60%)	4 (16%)	23 (66%)	7 (20%)
Group Dynamics	29 (85%)	3 (9%)	18 (72%)	2 (8%)	29 (83%)	2 (6%)
Group Ethics	26 (76%)	6 (18%)	18 (72%)	2 (8%)	24 (69%)	7 (20%)
Selection of Members	16 (47%)	15 (44%)	9 (36%)	11 (44%)	19 (54%)	12 (34%)
Diverse Populations	20 (59%)	12 (35%)	7 (28%)	13 (52%)	13 (37%)	18 (51%)
Group Types	15 (44%)	16 (47%)	12 (48%)	8 (32%)	11 (31%)	19 (54%)
Group Theory	23 (68%)	8 (24%)	16 (64%)	4 (16%)	21 (60%)	9 (26%)
Group Evaluation	5 (15%)	26 (76%)	2 (8%)	18 (72%)	4 (11%)	26 (74%)
Problems	15 (44%)	16 (47%)	9 (36%)	11 (44%)	17 (49%)	14 (40%)
Practical Considerations	12 (35%)	20 (59%)	4 (16%)	16 (64%)	10 (29%)	21 (60%)

Group Dynamics

Twenty-nine assistant professors indicated that “group dynamics” ranked as most important among lecture topics. Three assistant professors ranked this item as least important. Eighteen associate professors indicated that “group dynamics” ranked as most important among lecture topics. Two associate professors ranked this item as least

important. Twenty-nine full professors ranked “group dynamics” as most important among lecture topics in the group course, while two ranked the item as least important.

Group Ethic

“Group ethics” was ranked by 26 assistant professors as most important among lecture topics, while six ranked the item as least in importance. Eighteen associate professors ranked “group ethics” as most important among lecture topics in the group course and 2 indicated that the topic ranked least in importance. Twenty-four full professor identified “group ethics” as the most important lecture item in the group course, while 7 full professors identified this item as least in importance among lecture topics.

Selection of Group Members

Among assistant professors, this item was ranked as 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in importance by no more than one respondent in each ranking. The response by associate professors to this item was no more than 2 in ranking 1st, 2nd, or 3rd. Among full professors, two individuals identified “selection of group members” as most important and four identified that the topic was 2nd in importance among lectures in the group course.

Working with Diverse Populations

There were 16 assistant professors that ranked “working with diverse populations” as most important, while nearly as many (15) indicated that the topic was least important. Nine associate professors ranked this item as most important and ranked the item as least important. Nineteen full professors ranked this item as most important and 12 indicated that the topic ranked as least important.

Types of Groups

Among assistant professors, fifteen ranked “types of groups” as the most important lecture topic in the group course. Inversely, sixteen assistant professors ranked this item as the least important among lecture topics. There were 12 associate professors that ranked this item as most important among lecture topics and 8 that ranked this item as least important. Eleven full professors ranked “types of groups” as the most important lecture topic in the group course. A greater number of full professors (19) indicated that this was the least important lecture topic.

Group Theory

Twenty-three assistant professors designated “group theory” as the most important lecture topic in the group course, while 8 identified that this was the least important lecture topic. Sixteen associate professors identified the topic as most important and 4 indicated that the topic was least in importance. Twenty-one full professors identified that this was the most important lecture topic, while 9 identified as least important.

Evaluation of Groups

Five assistant professors marked “evaluation of groups” as most important and 26 indicated that this was the least important topic. Two associate professors considered this to be the most important lecture topic and eighteen indicated that the topic was least important. Four full professors indicated that this was the most important among group lectures, while 26 identified this as the least important lecture topic.

Problems Encountered by Groups

Fifteen assistant professors identified this item as most important among lecture topics. Almost as many assistant professors (16) indicated that this topic was least in importance. There were 9 associate professors that designated this item as the most important lecture topic in the group course and 11 who indicated that it was least in importance. Seventeen full professors believed that this was the most important topic, however almost as many (14) indicated that this topic was least in importance..

Practical Considerations in Setting Up a Group

There were 12 assistant professor that designated “practical considerations in setting up a group” as the most important lecture topic in the group course. Inversely, twenty assistant professors considered this the least important lecture topic. Among associate professors, four ranked this topic as the most important, while 16 indicated that it was least important among lecture topics. Among full professors, ten indicated that this item was the most important lecture topic and 21 indicated that it was least in importance.

Chi-Square Test

A chi square test has been used to determine the existence of a relationship between item 2 in Section I and item 8 in Section II. Chi square is a nonparametric statistical measure used to determine whether research data in the form of frequencies are distributed differently for different samples (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). In this case, there was an examination of the distribution of frequencies of ranked lecture topics among academic ranks. No statistical significance was found at an alpha level of .05.

Section III- Experiential Component

Several of the items in the experiential component of the survey were based on a 3-point Likert scale. The possible responses were 1.) Always; 2.) Sometimes; and, 3.) Never. Table 8 provides a synopsis of responses to these items.

Table 8

Responses to Experiential Items

Item	Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)	Number of Respondents
Required participation in a group	87.8	6.1	6.1	98
Informed of group requirement	72.5	16.5	11.0	91
Required to self-disclose in group	26.9	26.9	46.2	93
Clarification of appropriate self-disclosure	91.8	4.1	4.1	73*
Group used for “gatekeeping”	5.4	22.6	72.0	93
Activities used in class	58.9	31.6	9.5	95
Group leaders use exercises/activities	25.3	70.5	4.2	95
Opportunity to observe	32.6	52.6	14.7	95
Encourage students to work on personal growth in group	61.1	30.5	8.4	95

* Answer to this item is contingent upon answer to previous item.

Likert Scale Items

The first item asked the respondent if master's level group students were required to participate in a group. Ninety-eight of a possible one hundred participants responded to this item. Of the three possible responses, 86 respondents (87.8%) marked "always". Six participants (6.1%) marked "sometimes", and 6 participants marked "never" (6.1%). The mode response to this item was 1.00 or "always".

The second item submits that if the group experience is required, are students informed of the requirement prior to entering the program? Ninety-one individuals of a possible one hundred responded to this item. In this case, sixty-six participants (72.5%) checked "always", fifteen (16.5%) checked "sometimes", and ten (11%) checked "never". The mode of responses to this item was 1.00 or "always".

The next item inquired if the student who participates in the experiential group is required to self-disclose. Ninety-three individuals responded to the first of these two items. Twenty-five respondents (26.9%) indicated that students are "always" required to self-disclose, and twenty-five respondents (26.9%) indicated that students are "sometimes" required to self-disclose. Forty-three respondents (46.2%) indicated that students are "never" required to self-disclose. Results indicated that the most commonly recorded response to this item was 3.00 or "never".

A follow-up question to the previous item was included. The survey participant was asked if self-disclosure was required in the experiential group, was appropriate self-disclosure clarified to the student? Seventy-three individuals responded to this item. Of those respondents, sixty-seven (91.8%) answered "always" to the question. Three

respondents indicated “sometimes” and three indicated “never” to the inquiry at 4.1% of respondents, respectively. The mode of this item was 1.00 or “always”.

The next item was concerned with the experiential group being used for the purpose of “gatekeeping”. Ninety-three respondents marked this item. Of these respondents, five individuals (5.4%) marked “always”, twenty-one (22.6%) indicated that the experiential group is “sometimes” used for “gatekeeping”, and sixty-seven (72%) indicated that the group was “never” used for that purpose. The mode of response to this item was 3.00 or “never”.

Next, the item asked if experiential activities were used in class to prepare students for the group experience. Ninety-five respondents replied to this item. The results were as follows: 56 individuals (58.9%) checked “always” to this item, while 30 (31.6%) checked “sometimes”, and 9 (9.5%) indicated that activities are “never” used to prepare students for the group experience. The most frequent answer to this item or mode was 1.00 or “always”.

An inquiry was made into the use of structured activities in the experiential group in the next item. Ninety-five individuals responded. Of these responses, twenty-four individuals (25.3%) indicated that structured activities are “always” used in the experiential group, sixty-seven individuals (70.5%) marked “sometimes” as an answer to the inquiry, and four individuals (4.2%) marked that structured activities are “never” used in the experiential group. The mode of the answer to this item was 2.00 or “sometimes”.

The concern of the next item was if students are provided the opportunity to observe a group in action before participating in an experiential group. Ninety-five of a possible 100 individuals responded to the item. Thirty-one (32.6%) of the participants

indicated that students “always” had the opportunity to witness a group in action before participating in an experiential group. Fifty individuals (52.6%) indicated that “sometimes” students had this opportunity, and fourteen individuals (14.7%) indicated that students “never” had this opportunity. The most frequently reported answer to this question was 2.00 or “sometimes”.

The next item asked if students are encouraged to work on personal growth issues in the experiential group. Ninety-five individuals responded to this item. Of these responses, fifty-eight respondents (61.1%) indicated that students are “always” encouraged to work on personal growth in the experiential group. Twenty-nine individuals (30.5%) indicated that students are “sometimes” encouraged, and eight (8.4%) are “never” encouraged to work on personal growth issues in the experiential group. The mode was 1.00 or “always”.

Checked and Ranked Experiential Group Items

Type of Group

The next item inquired as to the type of group experience in which students participate. Ninety-two group instructors responded to this item. Table 9 provides a description of the responses.

Table 9

Types of Group Participation by Students ($n=92$)

Group Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Unstructured Here and Now with Self-Disclosure	45	48.9
Structured Here and Now with Self-Disclosure	35	38

Outside of Class with Role-play	1	1.1
In-class Group with Role-play	2	2.2
Other	9	9.8
Total	92	100.0

Pre-group Preparations

Participants were also asked to disclose all of the pre-group preparations that are utilized with students to prepare them for the group experience. Ninety-four of the one hundred participants responded to this item. Sixty-six (70.2%) participants identified that teaching students skills in self-disclosure was utilized. Eighty-nine (94.7%) participants identified that teaching students about the value and purpose of feedback was used. The clarification of students' expectations about issues that may face the group was checked as a pre-group preparation by eighty-two (87.2%) of the respondents. Sixty-five (69.1%) respondents indicated that instruction on how to respond to resistance, anxiety, and/or anger was utilized as a pre-group preparation. Thirty-seven (39.4%) of respondents indicated that pre-group preparation included exploration of personal issues in class. And, fifty-five (58.5%) checked that they encouraged students to explore personal issues in the group.

Ranked Goals for Students

Ranking of importance was involved in the next item. The individuals who responded were asked to rank the goals for counseling students who participate in the experiential group. According to respondents, the most important goal for students in the experiential group was to understand group process. Fifty-one (55.4%) out of a possible

ninety-two individuals indicated that this was the most important goal. Eight individuals did not complete this item. Twenty-two individuals (23.9%) identified this as the second most important goal. Personal growth was identified as the most important goal for students, in the experiential group by fifteen respondents (16.3%). Fifteen participants (16.3%) also identified acquisition of group leadership skills as the most important goal for students in the experiential group. These 15 respondents were out of a possible 92. Eight chose not to complete this item. Personal growth was also indicated as the least important of goals for students in the experiential group by forty-five (48.9%) respondents. While only two individuals (2.2%) out of ninety-two identified acquisition of group member skills such as giving and receiving feedback as most important goals for students in the experiential group, twenty-three (25%) indicated that this was the second most important goal for students.

Leader of Experiential Group

Survey participants were then asked the question, “Who leads the experiential group?” Ninety-four individuals answered this question. The results are as follows: Thirty-two (34%) indicated that the group counseling instructor lead the experiential group, twenty-two (23.4%) indicated that doctoral students lead the group, nineteen (20.2%) answered that the experiential group is lead by advanced master’s level students. Finally, forty-four (46.8%) marked “other” in response to this inquiry. Several respondents indicated that two different individuals lead the experiential group.

Hours in Experiential Group

In the last question concerned with the experiential group, participants are asked about the number of hours that counseling trainees spend in the experiential group.

Ninety-six individuals responded to this question. The majority of respondents (37.5%) indicated that counseling trainees spend 11 to 15 hours in the experiential group. Twenty-one (21.9%) indicated that trainees spend 16 to 20 hours in the experiential group. Fourteen respondents (14.6%) indicated that students spend 10 hours in the group experience. Eleven (11.5%) answered that students spend 26 or more hours in the experiential group. Nine (9.4%) answered that students spend 21 to 25 hours in the group, and five (5.2%) indicated that students spend less than 10 hours in the experiential group.

Cross-Tabulation

The academic rank of survey participants (item 2) was cross-tabulated with four different items in Section III. Similar to the cross-tabulation in Section II, the status of respondents were as follows: assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. The first two of these four items were on a likert scale. The first likert scale item cross-tabulated with status was concerned with the issue of the experiential group being used for the purpose of “gatekeeping”. The second likert scale item asked if students were provided an opportunity to observe a group in action prior to participation in a group.

The next two items involved ranking and checking items. The ranked item cross-tabulated with status was concerned with what respondents viewed as the most important goals for counseling students participating in the experiential group. The item in which respondents were asked to check categories inquired as to who leads the experiential group in which students participate.

Likert Scale Items

Item 14- Gatekeeping

Of the assistant professors that responded to the item concerned with

“gatekeeping”, one indicated that the experiential group is “always” used for gatekeeping purposes, 7 identified that the group is “sometimes” used for this purpose, and 23 indicated that the group is “never” used for this purpose.

None of the associate professors responding to this item indicated that the group is “always” used for gatekeeping. Five associate professors indicated that the group is “sometimes” used for gatekeeping, and 18 indicated that the group is “never” used for gatekeeping.

There were three full professors that indicated the experiential group was “always” used for gatekeeping purposes. Six full professors indicated that the group is “sometimes” used for gatekeeping, and 24 stated that the group was “never” used for this purpose.

Item 17- Observation Prior to Participation

Fourteen assistant professors indicated that students “always” have the opportunity to observe a group in action prior to participating in a group. Sixteen professors indicated that students “sometimes” had this opportunity, and two said that students “never” had this opportunity.

There were six associate professors that indicated students “always” had the opportunity to observe a group prior to participation. Thirteen indicated that students “sometimes” have that opportunity, and five indicated that students “never” have that opportunity.

Of the full professors that responded to this item, nine indicated that students “always” have the opportunity to observe a group prior to participating. There were 18

full professors indicating that students “sometimes” have the opportunity to observe a group prior to participation, and six indicated that students “never” have this opportunity.

Ranked and Checked Items

Ranked Item

The results of the cross-tabulation will be reported in the order of status among respondents. In this case, the order is assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. Table 10 provides a synopsis of the results.

Table 10

Cross-Tabulation of Academic Rank and Importance of Student Goals for Experiential Group

Student Goal	Assistant Professor		Associate Professor		Full Professor	
	More	Less	More	Less	More	Less
Ranked Importance						
Understanding Group Process	28 (82%)	5 (15%)	18 (72%)	3 (12%)	29 (89%)	4 (11%)
Personal Growth	11 (32%)	23 (68%)	6 (24%)	15 (60%)	14 (40%)	19 (54%)
Understanding Client's Experience	20 (59%)	13 (38%)	14 (56%)	7 (28%)	13 (37%)	19 (54%)
Acquisition of Member Skills	12 (35%)	21 (62)	8 (32%)	13 (52%)	18 (51%)	15 (43%)
Acquisition of Leader Skills	12 (35%)	20 (59%)	9 (36%)	12 (48%)	12 (34%)	19 (54%)

Among assistant professors, twenty-eight indicated that “understanding group process” was the most important goal for students participating in the required group and five ranked this goal as least in importance. While there were eleven assistant professors

that indicated “personal growth” was the most important goal for students in the required group, 23 indicated that this was the least important goal of students in the group. Twenty assistant professors indicated that “understanding the client’s experience in group counseling” was the most important goal of students in the required group, while 13 considered this the least important goal. There were 12 assistant professors that indicated “acquisition of group member skills such as giving and receiving feedback” was the most important goal for students in the required group, while 21 indicated that this was the least important goal of students in the group. There were 12 assistant professors that indicated “acquisition of group leadership skills” was the most important goal of students. Inversely, there were 20 assistant professors that indicated this was the least important goal of students.

Among associate professors, eighteen indicated that “understanding group process” is the most important goal for students participating in the required group and 3 indicated that this was the least important goal for students. While there were 6 associate professors that indicated “personal growth” was the most important goal for students in the required group, 15 indicated that this was the least important goal of students in the group. Fourteen associate professors indicated that “understanding the client’s experience in group counseling” was the most important goal of students in the required group, while seven considered this the least important goal of students. There were 8 associate professors that indicated “acquisition of group member skills such as giving and receiving feedback” was the most important goal for students in the required group, while 13 indicated that this was the least important goal of students in the group. There were nine associate professors that indicated “acquisition of group leadership skills” was the

most important goal of students. Inversely, there were 12 associate professors that indicated this was the least important goal of students.

Twenty-nine full professors indicated that “understanding group process” is the most important goal for students participating in the required group, while 4 ranked this goal as least in importance. There were 14 full professors that indicated “personal growth” was the most important goal for students in the required group. Inversely, 19 indicated that this was the least important goal of students in the group. Thirteen full professors indicated that “understanding the client’s experience in group counseling” was the most important goal of students in the required group, while 19 considered this the least important goal of students participating in the group. There were 18 full professors that indicated “acquisition of group member skills such as giving and receiving feedback” was the most important goal for students in the required group, while 15 indicated that this was the least important goal for students in the group. Twelve full professors indicated “acquisition of group leadership skills” was the most important goal of students and 19 indicated this was the least important goal.

Checked Item

The checked item was concerned with who facilitates the required group experience. The order of presentation will be assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.

Among 32 assistant professors that responded to this item, nine indicated that the group counseling instructor facilitates the mandatory experiential group. Five of the 32 assistant professors indicated that doctoral students lead the group. And of the 32

respondents, seven assistant professors indicated that advanced master's level students lead the required group.

Twenty-three associate professors responded to this item. Eight of these respondents indicated that the group counseling instructor leads the required group. Six answered that doctoral students lead the group, and six indicated that advanced master's level students lead the group.

Thirty-three full professors responded to this item. Thirteen full professors indicated that the group counseling instructor leads the required group. Eleven answered that doctoral students lead the group, and five indicated that advanced master's level students facilitate the group.

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test

A chi square test was used to determine the existence of a relationship between item 2 in Section I and items 14, 17, 21, and 22 in Section III. Frequency of responses to each of these items was examined to determine if different distributions existed among different academic ranks. No statistical significance was found at an alpha level of .05.

Section IV- Practicum Component

This section was concerned with the practical experience of students in the group course. Similar to the Likert scale questions in section III, the possible answers to first three questions of this section are "always", "sometimes", and "never".

Likert Scale Items

Survey participants were asked if students are required to lead a group. Ninety-seven of one hundred participants chose to answer this question. Fifty-eight (59.8%) responded that students are "always" required to lead a group. Twenty-two (22.7%)

indicated that students are “sometimes” required to lead a group, and seventeen (17.5%) indicated that students are “never” required to lead a group. The mode of this item was 1.00 or “always”.

Of the individuals who responded “always” or “sometimes” to the previous question (90 respondents), eighty-six (95.6%) indicated that student group leaders are “always” supervised. Three (3.3%) answered that students are “sometimes” supervised, and one (1.1%) indicated that students are “never” supervised. The mode was 1.00 or “always”.

The next item had 89 respondents out of 100. The item asked if supervised sessions were recorded. Twenty-six (29.2%) indicated that these sessions are “always” recorded, thirty-three (37.1%) answered that the sessions were “sometimes” recorded, and thirty (33.7%) indicated that the sessions are “never” recorded. The mode to this item was 2.00 or “sometimes.”

Checked Item

The final item in this section asks what type of group do students lead. Eighty-six individuals responded to the item. The largest percentage (54 respondents, 62.8%) indicated that a “counseling” group is the most frequently facilitated. The “psycho-educational” group is indicated as the second most frequently run group by forty-nine respondents (57%), and thirty-three respondents (38.4%) indicated that a “support” group was the most frequently run group. In conclusion, twenty-one participants (24.4%) identified that the “task” group was the most frequently run group.

Cross-Tabulation

The academic rank of respondents (item 2) was cross-tabulated with item 24 and item 25. Item 24 asked if students are required to lead a group. Item 25 inquired if students group leaders were supervised. The status of the respondents was in the following order: assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.

Item Twenty-Four- Cross-Tabulation

Thirty-four assistant professors responded to this item. Of those 34 respondents, 24 indicated that students are “always” required to lead a group, 6 indicated that students are “sometimes” required to lead a group, and 4 indicated that students are “never” required to lead a group.

Twenty-three associate professors responded to this item. Fourteen of the associate professors indicated that students are “always” required to lead a group, 6 answered that “sometimes” students are required to lead a group, and 3 answered that students are “never” required to lead a group.

Thirty-three full professors answered this inquiry. Sixteen indicated that students are “always” required to lead a group, 9 indicated that students are “sometimes” required to lead a group, and 8 answered that students are “never” required to lead a group.

Item Twenty-Five-Cross-Tabulation

Thirty-two assistant professors responded to this item. Of those 32 respondents, 31 indicated that students are “always” supervised and one indicated that students are “sometimes” supervised. There were no assistant professors that indicated that students are “never” supervised.

Twenty-two associate professors responded to this item. Twenty-one of the

associate professors indicated that students are “always” supervised and one associate professor answered that “sometimes” students are supervised. There were no associate professors that indicated that students are “never” supervised.

Twenty-nine full professors responded to this item. All twenty-nine full professors indicated that students are “always” supervised.

Chi Square Test

A chi square test was used to determine the existence of a relationship between item 2 in Section I and items 24 and 25 in Section IV. The frequency of responses to the inquiry, “Are students required to lead a group?”, was examined to determine if these responses were distributed differently among different academic ranks. Additionally, the frequency of responses to the item, “Are the group leaders supervised?”, was examined to determine if these responses were distributed differently among different academic ranks. No statistical significance was found at an alpha level of .05.

Discussion

Discussion of results is intended to elaborate on the research question: Among master’s level group instructors, how are the didactic, experiential, and practicum components being implemented to prepare students to become competent group leaders? The discussion section will follow the order in which the results were presented. Additionally, limitations to the study will be discussed and suggestions for future study will be addressed.

Section I-Demographic Information

With 91% of respondents reporting that they were members of ACA, 74% reporting membership in ACES, these associations seemed to be well represented among

survey participants. However, it was surprising that only 49% of survey respondents reported membership in ASGW. The Association of Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) is specifically associated with the aspect of group work within the counseling profession. Furthermore, this survey specifically targeted counselor educators who teach the group course at their respective institution. Consequently, it was interesting that those who participated in the study reported membership in ASGW at 49%.

The status level among respondents was evenly represented among assistant professors (34%), associate professors (25%), and full professors (35%). Although the majority of respondents indicated 13 or more years experience as group instructors, there were 20 respondents who indicated that they had 0 to 3 years of teaching experience. Group practitioners and experience as group member was well represented, as well. Consequently, the study benefited from a range of different experience levels of group instructors, leaders, and participants.

Section II-Didactic Component

The didactic component of the master's level group course appeared to be well utilized by instructors. Respondents confirmed that didactic teaching methodologies such as assigned reading, in class lectures, focused discussions, and film/videotape of group demonstration were highly utilized. Role-play demonstrations were to a lesser degree utilized, but still well represented according to 83% of respondents. Only 31% of respondents indicated that they made use of guest lecturers.

“Group process” was ranked as the most important lecture topic by a majority of group instructors (61.8%). A distant second was the topic of “group theory” (16.1%) and “group dynamics” was ranked as most important by 14.6% of respondents. Interestingly,

“group ethics” was not ranked as the most important lecture topic among group instructors, however, “group ethics” was indicated as the second most important lecture topic by 15 respondents (16.9%). Results to this item suggested that although not considered to be the main concern of didactic instruction, the topic of “group ethics” is nonetheless considered to be important among group instructors.

It is important to note that the implementation of these lecture topics is consistent with the professional training standards for the training of group workers of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW, 2000) and the 2001 Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs standards (CACREP, 2001). Group instructors are apparently meeting expectations in the didactic component of the course.

CACREP mandates that students must be provided with curricular experiences and be able to demonstrate knowledge in the common core area of group (CACREP, 2001). According to ninety-nine out of one-hundred group instructors that responded, this mandate is being met through the completion of at least one required group course at 79.8% of institutions and the completion of 2 required group courses at 20.2% of institutions. Furthermore, curricular experiences in group work were indicated as being met through participation in other courses by 52.6% of respondents.

The cross-tabulation of professor status level at respective CACREP-accredited institutions and the ranking of importance of lecture topics provided some notable points about experience level in relation to topic rankings. The analysis of the importance of lecture topics among assistant, associate, and full professors suggest that experience level does not play an appreciable factor in assigning importance to lecture topics. All three

status levels seemed to be relatively consistent in appreciation for different lecture topics. For example, according to Table 7, assistant, associate, and full professors consistently reported that “group process”, “leadership style”, “group dynamics”, and “group theory” were the most important lecture topics. Inversely, all three status levels considered “evaluation of groups” and “practical considerations in setting up a group” to be the least important lecture topics in the didactic section of the group course, respectively.

One suggestion for the lack of discrepancy among rankings of assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors would be that senior instructors have successfully provided instruction of group concepts and ideology to those students who later become group instructors. It may also be speculated that students who become group instructors have experienced not only competent didactic experience, but have developed an appreciation for the importance of certain lecture topics through their own practicum and group participation experiences. Overall, it does not appear that experience or status level among professors have an appreciable effect upon ranking the importance of lecture topics in the classroom portion of a group course.

A curious inconsistency does exist, however. In ranking the lecture topic, “working with diverse populations”, significant differences appeared between ranked importance by assistant professors and that of other academic rankings of associate and full professor, respectively. Twenty assistant professors ranked this topic as more important, while 12 indicated that it was less important. Inversely, seven associate professors felt that this topic was more , while 13 felt that it was lesser in importance. Also thirteen full professors felt that this topic ranked as more important, while 18 considered it to be less important. Some explanations might be offered for discrepancies

among academic ranks?

One possibility for these discrepancies may be found in the emphasis placed upon multicultural education. It is possible that assistant professors may have received instruction within their respective counseling programs at a time when greater emphasis was placed upon multicultural education. In the same respect, the possibility exists that those respondents with the academic rank of associate or full professor received training as counselor educators at a time when a lesser emphasis was placed upon multicultural education. How might the understanding of multicultural education of respondents effect the results to this cross-tabulation?

Furthermore, the perceived importance of working with diverse populations among instructors may affect the training of students in the group counseling course. Corey and Corey (2002) emphasize that “multiculturalism needs to be understood as a continuous theme in all fields of counseling rather than as an attempt to develop a new and separate field of study” (p.17). With this in mind, attitudes and opinions of group instructors toward working with diverse populations might provide some greater insight into this inconsistency.

It is also important to note that the item in question specifically asked respondents to rank the importance of “working with diverse populations”. The word “culturally” did not appear in this item. Consequently, inconsistencies may exist due to the fact that respondents did not fully understand the item. This identifies a possible limitation. In any case, the beliefs of group instructors about the importance of working with diverse populations would be an interesting area for future study.

Section III- Experiential Component

The experiential component has several points of note. To begin, responses to the Likert scale items provided some insight into group instructor's philosophies in providing students with a group experience.

Student Participation in Group

The majority of group instructors seem to concur that an experiential component is necessary for students in the group course as evidenced by the 87.8% of respondents that indicated that students are "always" required to participate in a group. Six participants did indicate that students were "never" required to participate in a group. However, it is important to note that the instrument of measure did not provide respondents with a means of explaining their answer to this query. Some possibilities exist as to reasons for excluding the experiential group.

The literature points to difficulty in providing ethical group facilitation. In other words, some group instructors find it difficult to provide facilitators for experiential groups outside of the course. In many cases, if the program is master's level, doctoral students are not available to run groups. Also, finding outside facilitators may also be difficult as private practitioners are often too busy maintaining their practice. Incidentally, this also provides some insight as to the reasoning behind group instructors facilitating their own groups.

Gatekeeping

The item that addressed the experiential group being used for the purpose of "gatekeeping" revealed some interesting responses. The majority of respondents (72%) revealed that the group is "never" used for the purpose of "gatekeeping". However,

twenty-one respondents (22.6%) indicated that the group is “sometimes” used for gatekeeping and five (5.4%) marked that the group is “always” used for this purpose. The 28% of respondents that answered “always” or “sometimes” to this inquiry inspire discussion about the ethical implications of using the group for this purpose. Forester-Miller and Duncan (1990) suggest that students may limit their openness in the group experience for fear of being evaluated on what is revealed about their personal lives. Another implication is that if “gatekeeping” is being implemented, students might assume that they may be evaluated based upon what they share in the group. Ultimately, the issue of “gatekeeping” violates the ACA (1995) standard of confidentiality in group work. Although it is more difficult to guarantee confidentiality in a group setting, the group facilitator is responsible for communicating the importance of confidentiality within the group setting and the benefits of maintenance of confidentiality. Group instructors who use the mandatory group experience as a means of “weeding out” students risk the violation a student’s (and group member’s) right to confidentiality.

The concept of modeling is considered by Yalom (1995) to be an imperative function of the experiential group. The author describes the concept of modeling through the therapeutic factor of “Imitative behavior” (p.16). He points to the evidence that the group facilitator models certain behaviors that can greatly influence the communicational pattern of the group. Consequently, the learning and growth potential of the participants of the group is greatly enhanced. Through experiencing how others in the group, particularly the group facilitator model certain behaviors, the participant may then acquire new and, perhaps, more effective means of behavior. If the group is used for

“gatekeeping”, group instructors potentially risk teaching students to be selective in sharing and to be distrust of the group process.

Goals of Students in Group

Another interesting item concerned the ranking of goals for students who participate in the experiential group. CACREP (2001) requires students meet for a minimum of 10 clock hours in a small group activity intended to provide students direct experience as participants in a small group. Donigian (1993) suggests that a group experience needs to be provided for counseling students. However, the author suggests that a discrepancy in opinion exists as to what kind of group experience students should have.

Results of this inquiry suggest that those same discrepancies in opinion may still exist among group instructors as to the purpose of the experiential group. Fifty-one individuals disclosed that the most important goal of students in the experiential group was to “understand group process”. Although it would be appropriate to speculate that an understanding of group process would benefit in group participants’ growth within the group, these responses suggest that personal growth is not the most important purpose for students in an experiential group. Additionally, fifteen respondents indicated that “acquisition of group skills” was the most important goal for students maintaining the suggestion that the group is intended to be an educational venture for students by some group instructors.

The results reveal that a different opinion exists among group instructors as to the purpose of the experiential group. A sample of respondents ($n=15$) did disclose that the most important goal for students was “personal growth”. The literature has suggested that

the growth opportunities provided by a group experience are invaluable to the effectiveness and development of counselors (Donigian, 1993; Trotzer, 1989; Yalom, 1995). CACREP (1988) indicated that students would be provided with the opportunity in a “planned and supervised group” to work on “self-understanding, self-analysis skills, and interpersonal skills” (p.46). The current CACREP standards (1994, 2001) have amended the group requirement to “a small group activity intended to provide direct experiences as a participant” (p.3). “Self-understanding, self-analysis skills, and interpersonal skills” have been removed from the statement. The question remains as to what encouraged CACREP to change the intention of the group requirement from 1988 to 1994.

Further, the majority of group instructors (61.1%, $n=95$) indicated that they “always” encourage students to work on personal growth in the experiential group, however, a large percentage of respondents indicated that students are “sometimes” encouraged and “never” encouraged to work on personal growth. In fact, forty-five respondents indicated that “personal growth” was the least important goal for students participating in the experiential group. These results indicate that instructors still remain divided on the purpose of the experiential group for students participating in the group course.

Who Leads the Group?

As indicated previously, the majority of group instructors believe in the importance of students having a group experience. Not to mention the fact that CACREP (2001) requires this experience for students attending accredited programs. The literature describes the advantages of student involvement in an experiential group from empathy

with future clients, to self-discovery, to learning about the function of groups at an emotional level (McCue-Herlihy, 1996; Pistole & Filer, 1991; Yalom, 1995). There exists little argument about the importance of this experience for students; however, there does exist some discrepancy as to who should facilitate the experience that is considered to be integral among most instructors.

Results indicate that group instructors manage the facilitation of the group in several different ways. Thirty-two (34%) of the instructors who responded to this survey indicated that the instructor of the group course also facilitates the experiential group. Obvious disadvantages exist for all involved in this sort of experience. As already discussed, students may hold back in such a group for fear of being evaluated by the instructor/ facilitator. Students may even refrain from sharing in an instructor led group with the belief that the group is used to remove students deemed unfit to remain in their respective programs. As indicated by results from this study the group may be used for this purpose by some instructors.

Other means of facilitating the group experience exist (Berg, Landreth & Fall, 1998). According to twenty-two (23.4%) respondents, doctoral students are implemented to facilitate the experiential group. Many programs offer only a master's degree. In this case, employing the use of advanced master's students as facilitators may be an option. Nineteen (20.2%) respondents indicated that advanced master's students were used for this purpose.

The considerable percentage (34%) of group instructors who also led students in the group experience raises some other ethical questions. If the main goal for students participating in an experiential group is "to understand group process", as many

instructors have indicated, the possibility exists that students are likely most concerned with not engaging in the group for fear of being evaluated. Consequently, understanding group process is potentially diminished. If the main goal is “personal growth”, which a lesser frequency of instructors have indicated, students may potentially fear evaluation of the instructor/group facilitator and consequently be limited in their own growth. In any case, responses to this study seem to support the fact that discrepancies exist among group instructors as to who leads the experiential group.

Section IV- Practicum Component

An encouraging result was discovered in this section of the survey. Eighty-six respondents (96%) indicated that, for those students that are required to lead a group, supervision is “always” or “sometimes” provided. Only 3 respondents indicated that supervision was “never” provided. Although alarming that students are leading groups without being supervised by group instructors, it is encouraging that the majority of respondents indicated that supervision was an important component. Results also indicated that the majority of instructors considered that leading a group is an important experience for students.

Limitations of the Study

Several of the items in the survey provided limited results. Had these items been presented differently, quality and response rate may have been improved.

Items 3a, 3b, and 4 present limitations that, may affect the interpretation of the results. Each of these items provides categories of experience in the form of years or hours (Ex. 0- 3 years, 16 to 20 hours). The presentation of these items does not permit the respondent to provide an exact identification of experience level. This method of data

collection does not take into account the idiosyncratic differences of experience from one year to the next. For example, in the case of “0-3 years” experience teaching a group course or facilitating a group, a significant difference exists between zero to one year, or even zero to one month. The same case exists when addressing the number of hours that respondents have participated in a group. With each of these items, quality of responses would likely have been improved had respondents been permitted the ability to indicate their exact level of experience.

A limitation also exists in the presentation of item 5. In this case, respondents were asked if they led a group outside of the academic setting. Results indicated that few survey participants (74%, $n=96$) indicated that they led a group outside of the academic setting. The results of this item may prove to be misleading. Responses to this item suggest that only 25% of respondents led a group. While many participants indicated that they do not lead a group outside of the academic setting, valuable information may have been overlooked by not asking participants if they simply led a group. It is appropriate to assume that responses to this item may have been different had the researchers asked this question initially. A precursor to this item that inquired about the respondents’ current involvement as a group leader outside or inside the academic setting would have been useful and perhaps improved the quality of results.

Item 8 contains a limitation which may have produced confusion among respondents. The item asks the respondent to rank the importance of lecture topics. The specific lecture topic, “working with diverse populations” appears to lack specificity. To eliminate possible confusion, the item may have been presented, “working with culturally diverse populations”. As a result of not providing the respondent with a more specific

choice, any conclusions that may be reached in response to this lecture topic will likely be skewed.

In general, limitations exist within this study that are common to all survey research. First, this survey does not measure causality. Since the study asks the practices of group instructors and not “why” these individuals employ certain practices, causality cannot be determined. Alreck and Settle (1995) conclude that when a study relies upon self-report, causality is difficult to prove due to the fact that respondents often do not know why a phenomenon occurs or they simply won’t say. Secondly, there can be no decisions made based upon the results of this survey nor can any ultimate answers be provided. The results to this study, which are based on survey returns, should be treated as simply a “body of evidence or set of indications” (p. 7).

Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Study

This study has attempted to describe how the didactic, experiential, and practicum components are utilized in the master’s level group course by instructors. Although insight has been provided as to the types of activities and methodologies that instructors use to prepare group leaders, there is no inquiry into the attitudes of master’s level group instructors. The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 1994; CACREP, 2001) and the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW, 1989; ASGW, 2000) have provided training standards for the instruction of group leaders, however, group instructors may not necessarily agree with these standards which instructors are ethically obligated to follow. Furthermore, group instructors may have discovered new and valuable methods of teaching the master’s level group course which have not yet been revealed to colleagues.

Consequently, the opinions of experienced group instructors and practitioners may provide more in depth insight into the continued improvement of instruction and the practice of group counseling. Therefore, group counseling would be well served by future studies that involve gathering and examining the opinions of group instructors about the practices and procedures used to teach the group course.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF GROUP TRAINING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Survey of Group Training Practices and Procedures

Section I - Demographic Information

1. Please check all memberships that apply:

a.) ACA ___ b.) APA ___ c.) ASGW ___ d.) ACES ___ e.) Other (Please specify)

2. Please check your current status within your institution:

a.) Assistant Professor ___

b.) Associate Professor ___

c.) Professor ___

d.) Regents Professor ___

e.) Other (Please Specify) _____

3. Experience:

a.) Teaching a group counseling course:

0-3 years ___ 4-6 years ___ 7-9 years ___ 10-12 years ___ 13 + years ___

b.) As a group practitioner:

0-3 years ___ 4-6 years ___ 7-9 years ___ 10-12 years ___ 13 + years ___

4. Please check your experience as a group member:

0-3 hours ___ 4-6 hours ___ 7-9 hours ___ 10-12 hours ___ 13-15 hours ___

16 + Hours ___

5. Do you currently lead a group outside of the academic setting? Yes ___ No ___

Section II – Didactic Component

6. Below is a list of methodologies that may be used in teaching the required group curriculum.

Please check all that you utilize in the group course.

a.) ___ Assigned readings

b.) ___ Lecture

c.) ___ Focused discussion

d.) ___ Role-play demonstrations

e.) ___ Guest lectures/demonstrations

f.) ___ Films/videotapes of group demonstrations

g.) ___ Other (Please specify) _____

7. Below is a list of concepts that may be lecture topics in a group course. Please check all the concepts that you address in the group course.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group process | h.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group therapy |
| b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership style | i.) <input type="checkbox"/> Working with diverse populations |
| c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group dynamics | j.) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of groups |
| d.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group ethics | k.) <input type="checkbox"/> Practical considerations in setting up the group |
| e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Selection of group members | l.) Other (Please specify) _____ |
| f.) <input type="checkbox"/> Problems encountered by groups | |
| g.) <input type="checkbox"/> Types of groups | |

8. Below is a list of concepts that may be lecture topics in a group course. Please rank the concepts in order of emphasis that each is given in your course. (1 + Most important, 10 + Least important)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group process | g.) <input type="checkbox"/> Types of groups |
| b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership styles | h.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group theory |
| c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group dynamics | i.) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of groups |
| d.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group ethics | j.) <input type="checkbox"/> Problems encountered by groups |
| e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Selection of group members | k.) <input type="checkbox"/> Practical considerations in setting up a group |
| f.) <input type="checkbox"/> Working with diverse populations | |

9. a.) How many group counseling courses are master's level students at your institution required to take? _____
- b.) Are any of the CACREP core curricular experiences in group work assigned to other classes? Yes ☐ No ☐

Section III- Experiential Component

Please circle the appropriate number: (1= always, 2= sometimes, 3= never).

- | | <u>Always</u> | <u>Sometimes</u> | <u>Never</u> |
|---|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| 10. Are master's level counseling students at your institution <u>required</u> to participate in an experiential group? | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. If participation is required, are the students informed about the requirement to participate in the experiential group prior to admission into the program? | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. Are students required to self-disclose in the experiential group? | 1 | 2 | 3 |

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
13. If students are required to self-disclose in the group, is appropriate self-disclosure clarified to the students?	1	2	3
14. Is the experiential group used for “gatekeeping”?	1	2	3
15. Are experiential activities utilized in class to prepare students for participation in the experiential group?	1	2	3
16. Do the group leaders utilize structured exercises/activities in the experiential group?	1	2	3
17. Do students have an opportunity in class to observe a group in action prior to participation in the group?	1	2	3
18. Do you encourage students to work on personal growth issues in the experiential group?	1	2	3
19. Please <u>check</u> the category that best describes the group in which counseling students participate.			
a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured here-and-now group that involves self-disclosure			
b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Structured here-and-now group that involves self-disclosure			
c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Outside of class group that involves role-play			
d.) <input type="checkbox"/> In-class group that involves role-play			
e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____			
20. Please <u>check</u> all pre-group preparations that are utilized with students participating in the required group. (You may check more than one).			
a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching students skills in self-disclosure			
b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching students about the value and purpose of feedback			
c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Clarifying students expectations about issues that they may face in the group			
d.) <input type="checkbox"/> Giving instructions about how to respond to resistance, anxiety, and/or anger			
e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration of personal issues in class			
f.) <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging students to explore personal issues in the group			
g.) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____			

21. What do you view as the most important goals for counseling students who participate in the experiential group? Please rank the following from highest to lowest: (1= Highest, 5= Lowest)

- a.) ___ Understanding group process
- b.) ___ Personal growth
- c.) ___ Understanding the client's experience in group counseling
- d.) ___ Acquisition of group member skills such as giving and receiving feedback
- e.) ___ Acquisition of group leadership skills

22. Who leads the experiential group? Please check the category that applies.

- a.) ___ The group counseling instructor
- b.) ___ Doctoral student(s)
- c.) ___ Advanced master's level students
- d.) ___ Other (Please specify) _____

23. How many hours do counseling trainees spend in the experiential group? Please check the category that applies.

- a.) ___ less than 10 hours
- b.) ___ 10 hours
- c.) ___ 11-15 hours
- d.) ___ 16-20 hours
- e.) ___ 21-25 hours
- f.) ___ 26+ hours

Section IV- Practicum Component

Circle the appropriate number below: (1= Always, 2= Sometimes, 3= Never)

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
24. Are students in the group course required to lead a group? (If the answer is "Never", disregard questions 25 and 26.)	1	2	3
25. Are the group leaders supervised?	1	2	3
26. Are the supervised sessions recorded (Audiotape or videotape)?	1	2	3

Check the appropriate space below.

27. What type of group do students lead?

a.) ☐ Psychoeducational

b.) ☐ Counseling

c.) ☐ Support

d.) ☐ Task

e.) Other (Please specify) _____

Section V- Participant Comments

28. What specific concerns do you have regarding the CACREP requirement that master's level students participate in a small-group activity?

29. In conclusion, has the survey covered all content relevant to CACREP core curricular group experiences? (Please elaborate)

APPENDIX B
PRECONTACT LETTER

Dear Dr. Smith,

Approximately one week from today, we will be sending you a survey regarding the practices and procedures utilized by group instructors in CACREP institutions. It is our understanding that you have been responsible for teaching group counseling. We would appreciate your participation in completing the aforementioned survey when it arrives at your institution.

Thank You,

Michael Altekruze, Ed.D.
Professor and Chair
University of North Texas

Stephen Armstrong
Doctoral Student
University of North Texas

Chris Simpson
Doctoral Student
University of North Texas

APPENDIX C
COVER LETTER

Department of Counseling, Development,
and Higher Education
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas

February 9, 2002

Dr. A. B. Jones
Assistant Professor
University of Texas

Dear Mr. Jones:

The attached survey instrument concerned with teaching methods utilized by group counseling instructors in CACREP institutions is a study being conducted at the University of North Texas. This study is concerned specifically with the group counseling curricular experiences that are required of all master's level counseling students. This survey is being sent to group counseling instructors at every CACREP-accredited program. The results of this survey will assist in providing a view of practices and procedures utilized by group instructors at CACREP institutions.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. We are particularly interested in obtaining your input because you have facilitated the group counseling curricular experiences that we are examining. The enclosed instrument has been developed with the help of several counselor educators who have taught group counseling. We anticipate that it will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete the attached survey.

Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence and none of the results of the survey will reflect upon you or your institution. We have assigned a coding number to identify your institution for the purpose of follow-up. **As a special incentive for participating, all surveys received by March 6, 2002 will be entered into a drawing for a Digital Video Disc (DVD) player!** We appreciate your willingness to complete this survey and to return it in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

Your return of the completed survey will serve as an indication of your informed consent to participate. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (940/565-3940).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us 940/565-2910. Thank you in advance for your help. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Michael Altekruze, Ed.D., NCC	Stephen A. Armstrong, M.Ed., LPC	Christopher Simpson, M.Ed.,
Professor and Chair	Doctoral Student	LPCi, Doctoral Student

APPENDIX D
E-MAIL COVER LETTER

Dear Dr. A

Recently, we sent a hard copy survey to you. Understandably, you may not have had the time to complete the survey. Because we value your input, we have chosen to follow-up the initial mailing with an emailed attachment. We hope that this method of following up the initial mailing will make completion of the survey more convenient for you. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence and none of the results of the survey will reflect upon you or your institution.

Please find a copy of this survey in an attachment to this letter. Your return of the completed survey will serve as an indication of your informed consent to participate. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the University of North Texas Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (940/565-3940). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us 940/565-2910. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Michael Altekruise, Ed.D., NCC
Professor and Chair

Stephen A. Armstrong, M.Ed., LPCS
Doctoral Student

Christopher Simpson, M.Ed., LPCi
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX E

SURVEY OF GROUP TRAINING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES
(MODIFIED FOR E-MAIL)

Survey of Group Training Practices and Procedures

Section I - Demographic Information

1. Please mark the space of all memberships that apply:

a.) ACA ___ b.) APA ___ c.) ASGW ___ d.) ACES ___ e.) Other (Please specify)

2. Please mark your current status within your institution:

f.) Assistant Professor _____

g.) Associate Professor _____

h.) Professor _____

i.) Regents Professor _____

j.) Other (Please Specify) _____

3. Experience:

a.) Teaching a group counseling course:

0-3 years ___ 4-6 years ___ 7-9 years ___ 10-12 years ___ 13 + years ___

b.) As a group practitioner:

0-3 years ___ 4-6 years ___ 7-9 years ___ 10-12 years ___ 13 + years ___

4. Please mark your experience as a group member:

0-3 hours ___ 4-6 hours ___ 7-9 hours ___ 10-12 hours ___ 13-15 hours ___
16 + Hours ___

5. Do you currently lead a group outside of the academic setting? Yes ___ No ___

Section II – Didactic Component

6. Below is a list of methodologies that may be used in teaching the required group curriculum. Please mark all that you utilize in the group course.

a.) ___ Assigned readings

b.) ___ Lecture

c.) ___ Focused discussion

d.) ___ Role-play demonstrations

e.) ___ Guest lectures/demonstrations

f.) ___ Films/videotapes of group demonstrations

g.) ___ Other (Please specify) _____

7. Below is a list of concepts that may be lecture topics in a group course. Please check all the concepts that you address in the group course.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group process | h.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group therapy |
| b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership style | i.) <input type="checkbox"/> Working with diverse populations |
| c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group dynamics | j.) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of groups |
| d.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group ethics | k.) <input type="checkbox"/> Practical considerations in setting up the group |
| e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Selection of group members | l.) Other (Please specify) _____ |
| f.) <input type="checkbox"/> Problems encountered by groups | |
| g.) <input type="checkbox"/> Types of groups | |

8. Below is a list of concepts that may be lecture topics in a group course. Please rank the concepts in order of emphasis that each is given in your course. (1 = Most important, 10 = Least important)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group process | g.) <input type="checkbox"/> Types of groups |
| b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership styles | h.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group theory |
| c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group dynamics | i.) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of groups |
| d.) <input type="checkbox"/> Group ethics | j.) <input type="checkbox"/> Problems encountered by groups |
| e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Selection of group members | k.) <input type="checkbox"/> Practical considerations in setting up a group |
| f.) <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Diverse populations | |

9. a.) How many group counseling courses are master's level students at your institution required to take? _____
- b.) Are any of the CACREP core curricular experiences in group work assigned to other classes? Yes ☐ No ☐

Section III- Experiential Component

Please underline the appropriate number: (1= always, 2= sometimes, 3= never).

- | | <u>Always</u> | <u>Sometimes</u> | <u>Never</u> |
|---|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| 10. Are master's level counseling students at your institution <u>required</u> to participate in an experiential group? | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. If participation is required, are the students informed about the requirement to participate in the experiential group prior to admission into the program? | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. Are students required to self-disclose in the experiential group? | 1 | 2 | 3 |

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
13. If students are required to self-disclose in the group, is appropriate self-disclosure clarified to the students?	1	2	3
14. Is the experiential group used for “gatekeeping”?	1	2	3
15. Are experiential activities utilized in class to prepare students for participation in the experiential group?	1	2	3
16. Do the group leaders utilize structured exercises/activities in the experiential group?	1	2	3
17. Do students have an opportunity in class to observe a group in action prior to participation in the group?	1	2	3
18. Do you encourage students to work on personal growth issues in the experiential group?	1	2	3
19. Please <u>mark</u> the category that best describes the group in which counseling students participate.			
a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured here-and-now group that involves self-disclosure			
b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Structured here-and-now group that involves self-disclosure			
c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Outside of class group that involves role-play			
d.) <input type="checkbox"/> In-class group that involves role-play			
e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____			
20. Please <u>mark</u> all pre-group preparations that are utilized with students participating in the required group. (You may check more than one).			
a.) <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching students skills in self-disclosure			
b.) <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching students about the value and purpose of feedback			
c.) <input type="checkbox"/> Clarifying students expectations about issues that they may face in the group			
d.) <input type="checkbox"/> Giving instructions about how to respond to resistance, anxiety, and/or anger			
e.) <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration of personal issues in class			
f.) <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging students to explore personal issues in the group			
g.) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____			

21. What do you view as the most important goals for counseling students who participate in the experiential group? Please rank the following from highest to lowest: (1= Highest, 5= Lowest)

- a.) ___ Understanding group process
- b.) ___ Personal growth
- c.) ___ Understanding the client's experience in group counseling
- d.) ___ Acquisition of group member skills such as giving and receiving feedback
- e.) ___ Acquisition of group leadership skills

22. Who leads the experiential group? Please mark the category that applies.

- a.) ___ The group counseling instructor
- b.) ___ Doctoral student(s)
- c.) ___ Advanced master's level students
- d.) ___ Other (Please specify) _____

23. How many hours do counseling trainees spend in the experiential group? Please mark the category that applies.

- a.) ___ less than 10 hours
- b.) ___ 10 hours
- c.) ___ 11-15 hours
- d.) ___ 16-20 hours
- e.) ___ 21-25 hours
- f.) ___ 26+ hours

Section IV- Practicum Component

Please underline the appropriate number below: (1= Always, 2= Sometimes, 3= Never)

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
24. Are students in the group course required to lead a group? (If the answer is "Never". Disregard questions 25 and 26.)	1	2	3
25. Are the group leaders supervised?	1	2	3
26. Are the supervised sessions recorded (Audiotape or videotape)?	1	2	3

Mark the appropriate space below.

27. What type of group do students lead?

a.) ☐ Psychoeducational

b.) ☐ Counseling

c.) ☐ Support

d.) ☐ Task

e.) Other (Please specify)

Section V- Participant Comments

28. What specific concerns do you have regarding the CACREP requirement that master's level students participate in a small-group activity?

29. In conclusion, has the survey covered all content relevant to CACREP core curricular group experiences? (Please elaborate)

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